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V. FAMILY LIFE

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

•596 The general principles of the Monguor family system have already been given above in Chapter III, and need here be recapitulated only very briefly. Until 1911–1922, when these notes were made, the Monguor family was a patrilineal, extended, patrilocal family. The extended family was under the authority of the grandfather, or of the great-grandfather if he survived. No family of which I had any knowledge exceeded four generations. The whole extended family lives in dwellings grouped around a common courtyard. The property and wealth are collectively owned by the whole group, but with authority over the property unequally concentrated in the senior generation. This manner of life is graphically described by the Monguors in expressions (used also by the Chinese and possibly borrowed from the Chinese) as "our family has only one chimney," or "we all eat out of one cooking-cauldron." While these sayings may be borrowed from the Chinese, the underlying principle, that of the hearth and the fire-spirit of the hearth, belongs independently to the nomad tradition from which the Monguors are descended.

Conversely, the break-up of an extended family is visibly symbolized when one of the nuclear families composing the extended family sets up its own kitchen, hearth, and chimney and begins to cook its own food separately. This means that it is parting from the extended family to which it belongs and founding a new extended family. The son who thus sets up separately becomes independent of the orders of the senior whom he formerly acknowledged as head of his family; he is beginning to work for himself and to retain any money that comes into his hands, instead of turning it over to the head of the family. When a son begins to act in this independent manner, the neighbors gossip, the family itself is uneasy, and it is recognized that the old family is breaking up.

596 587 It should not be assumed that polygamy is a regular characteristic of the extended family. Polygamy is very decidedly an economic question. On the one hand, polygamy does not go well with residence in a common courtyard, because it gives rise to quarrels among wives, and on the other hand there are few Monguors who are economically able to afford a household with more than one wife. If one of the sons living in the common courtyard should venture to ask the head of the family to provide him with a concubine (perhaps because his wife is barren) all the other daughters-in-law are jealous and their husbands share with them because they feel that the cost of the concubine means that the favored brother is being given more than his share of the family's capital. If the tormenting of the other daughters-in-law should drive the concubine to despair, she might commit suicide; and a suicide always means the complete ruin of the family.

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596 587 Theoretically, it might be argued that a son who had left the extended family to live separately would be free to take a concubine. In practice, he is rarely able to do so because the commonest reason for leaving the extended family is that it has become too poor to support all its members. The son who is starting life separately is, therefore, usually starting as a man too poor to afford a concubine.

587 Polygamy is, however, not frowned on in the case of a small family consisting of husband and wife, economically well off but without children. In order to prevent the line from dying out, thus breaking the continuity in the ancestor-cult, it is quite proper to take a concubine, even if the couple has already adopted a child. Polygamy is also not unusual in a small family in which there are children, if the family are well off; in such cases, if the wife does not object, her husband takes a concubine and the concubine helps her in her housework.

In one case in my experience, in a rich family consisting of husband, wife, and one son, who was already married, the mother objected to her husband taking a concubine, but did not mind arranging for a second wife for her son; the arrangement was one that provided an extra worker in the family.

The Monguors make a distinction between polygamy, as described above, and the levirate. In a family in which there are several sons, all of them married and having children, if one of the sons dies, the widow becomes the second wife of one of his brothers (usually a younger brother). The distinction between the levirate and polygamy is clear. Polygamy requires the expenditure of family funds for the acquisition of a second wife or concubine. In the levirate, the bride-price has already been paid: if the widow should leave the family in order to marry an outsider of her choice, she would be a loss to the family and it is proper, therefore, to make an arrangement that keeps her in the family. The levirate is, however, only practiced when brothers are still living together in the extended family, and when the widow consents.

THE FAMILY CHIEF

592 611 The position of chief or head of the family normally passes by primogeniture to the eldest son of the first wife of the previous head of the family. If at this moment the extended family should break up, instead of continuing to live together, the eldest son is privileged to receive a larger share of the fields and cattle forming the common property, and his own eldest son shares this privilege, also receiving a cow or horse, or a field. This rule of succession and inheritance is followed by both nobles and commoners.

592 In every family, rich or poor, noble or commoner, the head of the family is the religious chief, the family administrator, and the family representative in dealing with higher authorities outside the family. He repre-

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592 work. He entertains the guests, the other members of the family keep respectfully apart. At dinner, he and his wife occupy the places of honor and his food is served to him first. His prestige and the respect shown to him are, however, modified by the necessity for earning respect by proper conduct of the affairs of the family.

BREAKUP OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY

• 596 The usual time for the breaking up of an extended family is at the death of the grandfather. It is very seldom that his surviving sons remain united under the authority of the eldest son. More often, the sons divide the property and each one builds his own "chimney"; if he has grown sons of his own, he is already the founder of a new extended family. It is difficult for the oldest son to hold the family together, because, although he has a certain authority, it is not so great as that of a man of a senior generation. It is also at this moment that old quarrels among the wives of the various sons are likely to flare up; each woman, moreover, is eager to seize the opportunity to be recognized as the wife of the head of a new family, exercising authority in her own right over her sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren. I have often been told by old men that wives have a bigger stake in founding new families at this moment than do their husbands.

As an example we may take the case of a grandfather who has four sons, each of whom has three or more children. At the grandfather's death, it becomes apparent that the four brothers have different and uncongenial personalities—one perhaps is lazy, making the others feel that they are doing his share of the work and supporting his family for him, while another may be quarrelsome or avaricious. With the authority of the grandfather removed, it also becomes evident that each of the four sisters-in-law has her own personality; or perhaps one has several children and another, having only one, feels that life in the common courtyard means that she has more than her fair share of the household work and helping to look after other people's children. In short, it would be revealed that although there had been unity and harmony in the family during the ten or fifteen years that the grandfather had ruled it with tact, patience, and love for his children and grandchildren, there had nevertheless been underlying strains which, after his death, became strong enough to break up the family. While it is for such reasons that it is extremely rare to find an extended family of four generations holding together after the death of the grandfather, a few such families do hold together, not so much because of family affection as for economic reasons. The moment that an extended family begins to fall apart, its creditors appear, because once they have separated the individual families will no longer acknowledge mutual responsibility. If the extended family is so deeply in debt that after a settlement there would not be enough to divide among the separating families, it may

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596 go on living as a group even though the new head of the family is not obeyed as he should be and each component man-and-wife family is jealous and resentful of the others.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW FAMILIES

Continuing with the example of the four brothers who have been taken as a typical case of the breaking up of an extended family, it will be found that there are no dramatic ceremonies ratifying the establishment of the four new "chimneys." Sometimes the man who is establishing his own "chimney" will kill a sheep, invite some elders and his maternal uncle, offer them wine, and receive their good wishes for a happy future, while his sons and daughters-in-law and the grandchildren prostrate themselves before him and his wife. Thereafter, four new "chimneys" are registered in the archives of the village instead of one.

Generally speaking, it can be said that family ties among the Monguors are not as binding as they used to be. There is an increasing tendency to separate into small families. The bonds and associations of the clan have resisted change more successfully than the extended family.

596 888 Certain aspects of the family, however, remain strong, especially the gradation of respect according to seniority of generation. Children, from their earliest years, are accustomed to seeing each generation show respect to the generations senior to it, especially on formal occasions such as funerals, marriages, the installation of the chief of the clan, and all ceremonies connected with veneration of the ancestors. They grow up accustomed to this kind of respect, which is as important in the community and the clan as it is in the family. The result is a social outlook in which the individual is subordinated to the family and the community.

CLASSIFICATION OF KINSHIP

601 In the classification of relationship, the Monguors use the same term for all members of the same generation, with a differentiation according to sex. Thus, I address as "grandfather" not only my own grandfather, but all his brothers and the sons of his father's brothers. The term is *adic*, with differentiation of *syc* ("big") for those members of this class who are older than my grandfather, and *mula* ("little") for those who are younger. Similarly, I address as *anic* not only my own grandmother but the wives of all the men whom I address as "grandfather," with the same distinction of "big" and "little" for those who are older or younger than my actual grandmother. This term *anic*, which is also the polite expression for "madame," I likewise apply not only to the "grandmothers" who are married to my "grandfathers," but to my grandfather's sisters, because they have the same clan name that he has. In other words, his "sisters" are not only his father's daughters but the daughters of his father's brothers—

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597 before him and was given the name "Tiger." The new father then led the boy to the family graveyard, taking with him some wine, steamed rolls, meat, paper, and sticks of incense. The boy knelt and honored the spirit of the earth with a libation of wine poured on the ground. He then honored his new ancestors, kneeling and prostrating himself and making a burnt offering of paper and incense. Returning home, the boy was congratulated by the guests who called him by his new name, and he in return honored all the guests as a group by prostrating himself nine times. The ceremonies concluded with a dinner for the guests. The boy was happy with his fine new clothes, and willing to stay with a family that was so much better off then the one into which he had been born. His father went home, driving a nice cow before him. The boy was to be considered not only as "belonging" to his new family, but as being descended from his new father's ancestors and as fully integrated into the family.

INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR IN THE FAMILY

•596 The structure of a Monguor family can be clearly
596 seen when a guest is entertained at dinner. Grand-
264 father presides, sitting on the *k'ang* or heated sleeping-platform. Grandmother sits down only if invited by the guest to come up on the *k'ang*. If there is no guest, both grandfather and grandmother sit on the *k'ang*. The younger sons squat on their heels on the floor, in front of the *k'ang*, eating with chopsticks out of a bowl held in the left hand; the elder sons are allowed to sit on the edge of the *k'ang*. The staple of the meal is usually barley-flour noodles. Grandfather reaches out from the *k'ang* and puts some meat and vegetables in each bowl. Each, as he finishes his meal, licks his bowl clean and hands it to his wife to be washed. While the grandfather is sitting on the *k'ang*, none of the daughters-in-law may sit on the floor; they must remain standing.

596 It is disrespectful to present a cracked bowl to a
272 guest. After the food has been eaten, tea is served in the same bowl. Whether food or tea is served, the bowl must always be filled to the brim. Bowls or dishes must always be presented with both hands. Tea is poured with the right hand, while the left hand is held toward the guest, palm upward.

596 One must never step over a person who is sleeping or
606 lying down. Fathers and daughters-in-law must always
291 keep some distance between them. When there is a quarrel in the family, the first reproach by a daughter-in-law is always that "distance has not been kept." This standard of propriety is common to Monguors and Chinese. A daughter-in-law is not allowed to appear before the elder generation or guests bareheaded or without wearing either a long gown or a skirt covering her trousered legs. Only when a daughter-in-law is visiting her own mother's home may she go bare-headed. In her husband's home she must always wear a gown.

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608 curing the opportunity to pasture his large flocks of sheep on the Tibetan grazing grounds. Similarly, a 648 Muslim will take the oath with a Monguor in order to increase and improve his wool and skin business by [282] having, within the territory of the clan of his Monguor friend, a protector for his business and a home at which to stay. The Monguor benefits by being able to stay with his Muslim brother for several days at a time when making trips outside of Monguor territory.

Another special application of the institution of sworn brothers will be noted when we come to the description of the trading caravans that travel into and through Tibetan territory, and of the fishing engaged in by the Monguors in the waters of Kukunor lake.

608 In contrast to the tradition in the time of Chingis Khan that after the death of a sworn brother his son might appeal to the surviving sworn brother, among the Monguors the family of a sworn brother who has died has no continuing obligation. The oath may be taken for a limited period and for the achievement of a specific purpose, and be terminated when the purpose has been achieved. The oath may also be formally terminated under other conditions. Thus, in one case of which I knew, three young men in the district of Tolong took the oath together. Six months later they invited an old man to become their "sworn father." A goat was killed and the ceremony was carried out. For three years the three young men were faithful sworn brothers and showed toward their "sworn father" the devotion of true sons. The relationship was publicly known. After three years, however, gossip began to spread. People wondered why this oath had been taken when the district was at peace. It was suggested that perhaps they had subversive intentions of some kind and that harm might come to the whole community. Eventually the chief and elders of the village summoned both the sworn brothers and their sworn "father" before them and ordered them to abjure their relationship at a ceremony at the village temple, in the presence of the whole community.

Among Monguor women the equivalent or partial equivalent of "blood brotherhood" is to become "dry sisters." This relationship is only between two women; it is not extended to a group of more than two. The two who agree to be "dry sisters" do not swear an oath, but present each other with a piece of clothing and sit down to a meal together. They visit each other at New Year's, on the fifth day of the fifth month, and go to help each other in time of sickness. They invite each other to such celebrations as those for childbirth and marriage.

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

428 The division of the inheritance is one of the most diffi-
●596 cult of all problems in the extended family of the patrilineal Monguor society. It usually takes place when the grandfather dies and the sons decide to set up sepa-

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rate "chimneys." The decision to separate has usually, in such cases, been foreshadowed by quarrels and resentment among the sons, making it inevitable that when the actual division of the inheritance takes place there are bitter disputes.

In order to make a satisfactory settlement possible, the sons usually invite the chief of the village and the village elders, the senior representatives of their own patrilineal kin, and of course their own maternal uncle and those of their wives to take part in the discussion, which takes place in the open air at the threshing floor, witnessed by the population of the whole village. Such a discussion may take several days. Each maternal uncle is the advocate of his own sister's son, the seniors of the patrilineal kin represent the common interest of the patrilineal line, and the village chief and elders are the voices of the community.

In this discussion every possible proposal and compromise is put forward in order to secure an agreement that will leave no smoldering feud behind among the brothers. Finally contracts are written, a sheep is slaughtered, and a dinner is given to the elders to thank them for their services. The brothers prostrate themselves before each other to signify that, though they have broken up the extended family, they are still on good terms.

The property that is thus divided is of several kinds. Among any people, riches are relative to the economic system as a whole. Since the Monguors have become agricultural, land is the most valuable property. Since the tradition of cattle breeding still continues, however, livestock are also important. In addition houses, agricultural implements, clothes, and money must be considered.

The basis on which division must be determined is the fact that under the patrilineal system the entire extended family, with authority concentrated in the grandfather, is the owner of fields, cattle, houses, agricultural implements, and money, with individual property restricted to a few personal possessions. As long as the extended family holds together, all of its members produce for the common benefit and what is to be done with what they earn is decided by the head of the family.

Since, under the patrilineal system, sons alone may inherit, the property is first divided into as many shares as there are sons with the modification, already noted above, that the eldest son receives an extra large share and the eldest son of the eldest son also receives a special share; a son who has become a lama, however (and therefore will have no legitimate heirs), receives no share at all.

The sons of a son who has died are entitled to receive and divide their father's share. A son who has been adopted by his father's brother inherits from his adopted father and not from his real father. Similarly, a son who has been given to be adopted by a non-related family loses his rights of inheritance in his family of origin.

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428 If one of the sons has died without having sons of his own and without having adopted a son, his share is divided among his brothers.

596 If, in order to acquire a wife, a man has contracted to work all his life in his wife's family he loses all right of inheritance in his family of origin, although he retains his original surname or clan name. Such a man may 583 try to claim a share in the inheritance of his wife's 428 family, but the claim is usually contested and settled by some sort of compromise—indicating that this kind of marriage is in itself a makeshift, not fully provided for by the rules and customs of the society. As I have pointed out in my previous study, *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen* (p. 118–119) the right of such a man to inherit from his family of origin is academic, since he would not have left his family for the sake of this kind of marriage unless his family had been so poor that it could offer him no inheritance worth having.

The customs of inheritance show the difference between "marriage with the pole" and "marriage with the girdle." The girl who "marries with the pole" does not leave the clan or lose her clan name; consequently, her children, by unknown or unacknowledged fathers, bear the clan name and remain in the clan, which entitles them to a share in the inheritance as if their mother had in fact been their father. In the case of the girl who "marries with the girdle" on the other hand the father is known and acknowledged, as explained above. The girl takes the clan name of this man, even though he may never return, and consequently her child or children do not bear her clan name and are not entitled to share in the inheritance.

428 It is fully in accordance with the patrilineal principle that husband and wife do not inherit from each other or from each other's families. An exception to this rule is that the widow of the head of an extended family always receives some land and livestock from her husband. The exception is only partial and temporary however, as the widow lives with one of her sons, generally the youngest, who inherits this property after her death.[39]

Because of the strong influence of Tibetan society on that of the Monguors, a word should be said about the Tibetan rules of inheritance. In my previous study, *Le mariage chez les T'ou-jen* (p. 49), I mentioned that in the speech made by the master of ceremonies at a Mon-

[39] This arrangement corresponds to the ancient custom in pastoral nomadic society under which (*a*) the sons as they grew up were provided with wives and given a share of the cattle, whereupon they could move away and set up independent camps, leaving the youngest son as guardian of the parents in their old age and sole heir to the residual family property at their death; and (*b*) if a man had secondary wives, these were, at his death, inherited by his sons with the exception that the first wife could not be inherited by any of the sons and no secondary wife could be inherited by her own son, thus making it necessary to provide for the senior wife until her death. These principles are obviously rooted in the fact that when livestock, instead of land, are the most important property, dispersal may be convenient in order to avoid crowding the pastures.—O. L.

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Women also own personal property, including their clothes and jewelry, which are for the most part presents from the woman's own family. It has also been noted above that it is customary for a girl's maternal uncle to give her, before she is married, some land and calves, or to plant some trees for her, and to give her in addition, when she is married, some land and some more animals. The maternal uncle looks after this property for her. Similarly, sisters entrust their personal treasures to the care of a brother or brothers. Thus a married woman has a kind of insurance in the form of property that is partly in the care of a brother and partly in the care of one of her mother's brothers. (Among the circum-Polar peoples, including the Koryaks, Chukchis, and Lapps there is also "women's property"; livestock belonging to a woman before marriage, or given her by her father at the time of marriage, remain her personal property.) [41]

A woman's property may continue to increase after her marriage. When she goes to visit her own family, they frequently give her presents of cotton cloth, clothes, or money. Monguor women have also adopted from Chinese women the practice of keeping chickens. In the extended family, each daughter-in-law has her own chickens, the eggs of which she collects herself and is allowed to sell. In addition, after the crops are threshed the gleanings on the threshing floor are collected and divided by the daughters-in-law. Similarly when opium is harvested the poppy juice is cooked until it becomes thick and gluey. Each individual family in the extended family cooks its own share of the harvest, which must be poured into the kettle of the head of the family; but each daughter-in-law may keep that part of the opium that sticks to the inside of her own kettle without being scraped off— a valuable saving.

Another perquisite is that when peddlers and traveling merchants come around selling sugar, fruit, candies, and cakes to the women and their children it is not unusual for a daughter-in-law to "steal" a little grain from the family granary, while the parents-in-law pretend not to notice, in order to pay for such purchases.

The jewelry and other little treasures that a woman keeps with her in her husband's family are carefully stored in a locked chest in the woman's own room.

CONCLUSIONS

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The general conclusions to be drawn from these data on family life seems to be that the children are the hub around which the whole Monguor family turns. The chief of the extended family is a happy man at home and is esteemed in the Monguor society only if he has grandchildren; the sons love their wives only when they bear children; the wives feel that they are important in the family only when they have children and sons. The children build up the morale of all the members of the

[41] Hubert Konig, *op. cit.*, 625. [P. 1096]

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family, give them strength and courage in the struggle for the necessities of life, and finally, as I always observed, the love of the grandparents for their grandchildren holds the family united, because only when the grandparents love their children can the daughters-in-law, who are so numerous in the family, forgive each other's and the grandparent's shortcomings and deficiencies. Love for the children is the oil that makes the wheels of the Monguor family turn smoothly. No Monguor can withstand the love displayed for his children.

MORALITY IN THE MONGUOR FAMILY

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It is a general phenomenon that husbands and wives who really enjoy the delights of a happy family life do not feel the need of indulging themselves with pleasures shocking to each other's feelings. People engrossed the whole year long with the problem of making ends meet, dispose of little time to spend in that way and cannot afford its costs. In order to understand the problem we must take stock of the peculiar conditions under which the members of an extended family live. The sons, with their wives and children, live in the same courtyard, one next to the other, with the chief of the family and his wife among them. Permission for absence must be granted by the chief of the extended family, and because there is only one small gate to enter the courtyard, every visitor is instantly noticed, the reasons for his visit are discussed by all the daughters-in-law, and the length of his stay is well observed. Every one in the courtyard is the guardian of the other members of the family, and so the opportunity for misbehavior at home is reduced to a minimum. These are the conditions of every extended family. There is no secrecy. They live in glass houses. The opportunity for misbehavior in small families consisting of husband, wife, and small children is greater, although these families have next door neighbors whose tongues they cannot prevent from wagging. A married daughter who visits her parents, sometimes for many weeks, is more free since her parents do not have as much commanding influence upon her as when she was a child. Very long visits of married daughters at the home of their parents are discouraged by the older people, who seem to know more about the matter. Attendance at the public meetings when such problems are tackled in the presence of all the very interested villagers and the infliction of dishonorable punishments undoubtedly have a salutary and preventive effect upon the people; but in the Monguor society, as in all other societies, it happens that once in a while somebody falls from grace.

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It is not allowed to the young folk to tell smutty jokes in public or to sing lascivious songs in the village; at weeding time, however, obscene songs are sung in the open fields and allowance seems to be made for that custom. At public festivities, at the lamaseries and at the general assembly of the clan, men and women are

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and her children. (3) Importance of the mother, daughter-in-law, children, maternal clan. (4) The practice of husband-sons-in-law.

A. Present-day Patriarchal State System of the Large Family

121 In order to be able to understand a large part of the marriage rites and customs which we have described in this study, one must necessarily admit the hypothesis of a former matriarchate among the T'ou-jen.

546 Indeed, a large part of the marriage customs is unexplainable in the strictly patriarchal organization in which the T'ou-jen live today. Their family organization is that of the "large family." The grandfather is head of the family. His sons and grandsons after marriage continue to live under his authority, in the same courtyard, as long as life together is more or less possible. The grandfather has the community property at his disposals; he makes the sales, the purchases, the borrowings, etc. All that which is acquited by the sons or the grandsons goes back into the collective patrimony, and none of them is an owner with personal title. The grandfather has at his disposal not only the property but even the persons who constitute the family in the sense that he assigns to each one of them his daily /150/ occupations and his mode of life. The children belong neither to the mother nor the father but to the grandfather alone who will make of them monks, farmers, merchants, men of letters, as seems fitting to him. The grandfather alone is responsible before the T'ou-jen headmen for the conduct of all the members of the family. Succession in the family is regularly from father to son; at the death of the head of the family, the sons alone inherit the community property to the exclusion of the daughters. Conclusion: In such a patriarchal system the women and the maternal clan do not count at all.

121 But it has been said with much logic: "Scientific hypotheses are not true...they are convenient." Let us try, then, in order to be

preclude their enjoying any great influence.

The Salars' pattern of social life follows the Islamic form. Patriarchy rules the extended family, whose members' main occupation is agricultural work. However, agriculture goes hand in hand with trade, which plays also a noticeable role. As a group, the Salars are economically unimportant since they form only a small Turkic tribe.

The Sarigh Uighurs:

The Sarigh Uighurs, the so-called Yellow Uighurs, are a small tribe of Turkic origin which is becoming extinct. Although immediate neighbors of the Chinese, they never learned agriculture, and remained herdsmen. Nowadays the Sarigh Uighurs are mostly hired shepherds of Chinese cattle owners. Frequently one also finds them as laborers on Chinese farms. An occasional Sarigh Uighur family owns a few cows, sheep, and horses. The smallest and the only social unit, is the patriarchal family.

The Shera Yögur:

The people belonging to this small Mongolian tribe, rapidly becoming extinct, are semi-nomadic herdsmen. The old Mongolian clan-system is still preserved. Clan exogamy exists and the migrational units are the single clans. The economic centers, however, are their Buddhist monasteries, for it is the monasteries who own the herds and not the individual tribesmen.

The Monguors:

Ethnically consisting of Mongols, Turks, Tibetans, and Chinese, speaking an old Mongolian and Tibetanized dialect, the Monguors are the only Mongolian tribe of the Northwest that shifted successfully from nomadic pastoralism to farming. They learned farming and the use of their agricultural tools for raising barley, wheat, peas, potatoes, etc., from the Chinese. However, livestock still plays an important role as the second inportant economic resource. While sheep, cows, mules, and pigs are economically important, horses are bred only because to own horses is a mark of prestige.

The basic social and economic unit of the Monguors is the extended family which is patrilineally and patrilocally oriented. The grandfather and great-grandfather enjoy authority over all members of the family. Property is collectively owned.

The families belong to a clan which is headed by a chieftain whose Chinese title is T'u-ssu, who is at the same time a Chinese official. Originally the clan chieftain was simply the head of a number of extended families, whose migrations he directed and whose highest duty was the military protection of the clan through organization and training of the men. Later

/The Monguors/

N *563 M 614 565 554 [466] into another lord's service. If they attempted to do so, the punishment was death. After the great rebellion of the Moslems (1862-1878), however, the military power of the Monguor gradually declined. No T'u-ssu after this time really wielded any true power.

The principle of corvee, to which the Monguor were still liable, is founded on the vassalage which previously bound the nomads to the "service" of the chief. Although they neither tilled the soil nor paid taxes, nonetheless they were real vassals.

N *563 M 614 217 565 The register of all noble families is kept at the seat of the T'u-ssu. Even the daughters, and the families into which they marry, are noted. A noble is also entered in the book of genealogies. However, the names of unmarried sons are not inscribed, because they presumably have not produced sons for the clan.

N *563 M 174 565 M [554] When the Monguor first settled in their frontier territory and began the transition from nomadism to agriculture, there was probably considerable social distance between the commoners and the nobles. With settled life and the increasing dominance of agriculture, noble families, like commoner families, became increasingly dependent on their ability to manage their own farms. Local prestige was determined more and more by wealth and ability, and class became secondary.

N *563 M 621 622 565 The Monguor village consists of a group of families living in a well-defined territory and subject to the immediate authority of the village chief. All villagers till the soil, and the population is large or small according to the fertility of the soil and the extent of the pastures. Nobles and commoners live in the same kind of house, and they gain their livelihood in the same manner. Therefore, their substance and wealth are not sharply differentiated.

N *563 M 596 [421] [561] [595] M [428] Until 1922 the extended Monguor family was a patrilineal, patrilocal family under the authority of the grandfather, or the great-grandfather if he survived. No family usually exceeded four generation. Property and wealth were owned collectively, but authority over the property was unequally concentrated in the senior generation. Polygamy in Monguor society is decidedly an economic question, since polygamy does not go well with residence in a common courtyard. The breakup of an extended family is visibly symbolized when one of the nuclear families sets up its own kitchen. The position of chief or head of the family normally passes by primogeniture to the eldest son of the first wife of the previous head. In every family, rich or poor, noble or commoner, the head of the family is also the religious chief, the family administrator, and the family representative in dealing with higher authorities outside the family. In his administration of the family, he has authority over all the community property.

M [182] [168] [428] The breakdown of the extended family usually takes place when the grandfather dies. It is very seldom that his surviving sons remain united under the authority of the eldest son. More commonly, the sons divide the property and "build their own kitchens."

/Tibetans of Chinghai/

N *563 586 the father invariably keeps the sons, but a daughter sometimes goes with her mother.

VI. The Mongours

M 594 596 [611] [591] A. The Family Organization

Schram describes the typical Mongour family as being "patrilineal, extended and patrilocal". The extended family is composed of a number of closely related nuclear families. A nuclear family consists of a man, his wife and their unmarried offspring. The N *563 extended family is usually headed by the grandfather, or the great-grandfather, if he is alive; his wife, his sons, and, if they are married, their wives and children compose the rest of the family. M [556] In the richer families, occasionally the concubine, or concubines, and their offspring also belong to the extended family.

M [361] The extended family has a common courtyard, around which the separate dwellings of the nuclear families are grouped. The property is owned by the group as a whole, but the head of the family has the most authority over it. The common kitchen, hearth and chimney symbolize the unity of the extended family. This fact is often expressed in Mongour sayings like "our family has only one chimney," or "we all eat out of one cooking-cauldron." Thus, M [182] [252] the breakdown of an extended family is symbolized by one of its nuclear families setting up its own kitchen and beginning to cook its own food. Within the extended family, the nuclear families are M well defined. The identity of the nuclear family is emphasized by [342] the fact that it has its own room within the quarters of the extended family. In it are kept some personal possessions, like clothing. M [264] After eating the main meal of the day with the rest of the extended [342] family, each nuclear family returns to its own room.

The family head is the religious chief, family administrator N and family representative in dealing with higher authorities. Each *563 spring, on the occasion of the ceremony venerating the ancestors, M 592 he represents the family in general meetings of the clan. Nor are 554 his duties confined to the family religious rites. As head of a [169] family, he also is required to attend shamanistic ceremonies in the village temple. Even more important are his economic duties and responsibilities. He has control over all the community property belonging to the extended family, and any money due any of its individual members is deposited with him. He is the one who decides how this money is to be spent. He also handles all the important economic transactions of the family, such as buying and selling cattle and grain. Moreover, the family head directs and supervises the ordinary tasks of cattle breeding and cultivating the fields, and assigns members of the family to their daily duties. He also enjoys a certain authority over the private matters of the individuals; e.g., he makes the arrangements for marriage and funerals, and